

Haudenosaunee Language and Culture Based Education

Capstone Project

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By

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Tsákanaklate tyotkut aknulha yeyukya?tahawe kanuhsesne. Tho kwi nu takatehsawa

I was born just always my mother she carried me over there our longhouse. There is where I started

akewyatehtane tsi niyukwalihota okhale tsi ni yukwawana ukwehuwehnéha? sawatlu
for me to learn it, of our ways and our language Oneida also nine

tsátewakohsliyaku, ne tho ne wakatkahlatu aktenu yewakatayatu ona kwi kitlutake tsí
tyukwatati

when I was years old at that time I quit going to school away (elsewhere) now for me to stay home where we live

na kwi aknulha okhale otyake latiliwayatakwa ni yuklihunya ni wa?akwahsle tsi ni
kayelha ne win

and my mother and others they had responsibilities they had taught me we followed it the way that its happening

kaye niyoliwake kanuhwelatuksla tsí niyohsles tha kwi niyot tsi yukwayatehta·u

the four things the thanksgiving during the length of the year that's the way that we had learned

tayakwatahnuhwelatu tsi nahte ta shukwawi nén shukwayátisu ayukwayake

for us to be thankful of what he has given us the creator for us to have

kaliwakwenyastak tsi nukwa kwah akkweku tsi nahte kahsu tsiyuhwatsyate tahnú

respect, in the direction of (towards) everything that has been created of where the earth stands and

ayukwatyelatahkwahake ka?nikuhliyo skana okhale kátshatstahsla. Tho kwi niyoht tsi

for us to go according to it goodmind, peace, and strength. so thats the way

yukwakwatakwa tsi nu yakwakanyate ayukwánikuhlaniluhake skana yakwanuhtunyuhe.

we have arranged it of where we are standing as a group for us to be strong minded, peaceful in our thinking.

Dedication

Yah akkweku takahlúkha tsí níkwano·tá' nén ukwehuweneha. Sheku ní wakewyátehtauhati ne

Not all I speak (understand) our language Oneida. Still me I'm learning along

Ne kati tyotyeláhtu I·kelhe akyaluhkhane nén kheyá?o·kuha yolihowaná ne tho nu aoliwake

So then the first thing I want for the two girls to speak it is my children (two daughters) it is a great matter there where on that subject

kaskenhas akhelihuni akniwyátehtane akyaluhkhane tsi ní twawánotá. E·so khelaletsyaluhe

I'm fighting for that for me to teach them for the two of them to learn for them to speak our language. A lot I encourage them

kás akyatati ukwehuweneha.

always for them to speak the Oneida language.

Abstract

This paper discusses the importance of learning Indigenous language and culture with a specific focus on the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The benefits of Haudenosaunee language and cultural revitalization include an increase in a sense of identity and purpose for Haudenosaunee students, thus resulting in academic success. The discussion suggests that language and culture immersion is the preferred method for achieving Haudenosaunee language and cultural revitalization. However, learning goes beyond an language and culture based educational establishment. There is also a need to implement consistent values of culture in order to establish positive feelings about language and culture revitalization. Aside from implementing traditional values within diverse learning environments, there is a need for cultural values to be consistently reinforced in the homes of the community. In order to achieve Haudenosaunee language and culture revitalization through immersion programs, it is important for Haudenosaunee families to honor and model positive parental responsibilities to their children by learning along side their children in the home, in school and other diverse learning environments.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The existence of the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) Confederacy, commonly known as the Six Nations, or Haudenosaunee peoples, relies on the revitalization of the language and culture, which uniquely identifies a peoples' political and cultural identity as a Nation of Peoples. The Haudenosaunee are a matrilineal people in whom women play a significant role in the Haudenosaunee society. It is through the matrilineal line in which "women nurture the extended family and preserve the essence of the culture" (Hagen & House, 1995).

The Personal Investigator of this study set out to encourage the reclamation of the matrilineal role in nurturing the families through establishing a sense of identity. In nurturing the family by providing an education that enriches their sense of identity. In order to achieve a sense of identity, Haudenosaunee must first be provided their Indigenous language. Through their language they will be able to understand the culture of their people. Thus developing the sense self-identity.

This study will explore the role of Indigenous language and culture, in particular Haudenosaunee languages in general as critical to the survival and continued cultural existence as distinct, Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. Common themes such as, identity, culturally based curriculum, immersion programs, teacher characteristics, and family involvement, found within the research suggest these are most important for implementing a successful language and culturally based Haudenosaunee education. These methods can be found within the Haudenosaunee' cultural teachings. This study suggests that the key to creating a supportive, positive learning environment and successful language and culture-based education is utilize Indigenous methods and

pedagogy grounded in Haudenosaunee/Oneida cultural values while emphasizing the importance of family involvement in their children's learning experiences. Without the cultural values of the Haudenosaunee language and perspective will perish.

Purpose of the Study

The Haudenosaunee like many other Indigenous nations is now in a critical period of language and cultural revitalization. According to House (2010) there have been numerous initiatives to restore and sustain Haudenosaunee languages and culture. However, there are fewer first language speakers within many Haudenosaunee communities. (House, 2010)

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the importance of practicing traditional principles and teachings to ensure successful language and culture-based education for the Haudenosaunee people across the Haudenosaunee confederacy. The research question for this study is: Are Haudenosaunee languages learned more efficiently within a culturally based framework?

Background (or Significance of the Study)

Research has shown many benefits of language initiatives within Haudenosaunee communities. House (2010) identified the four benefits of Indigenous Language Learning (ILL) among Oneida High School graduates as "increased identity, improved family ties, higher educational success and healing" (p. 59). Language initiatives within the education setting have shown to increase student's sense of purpose and identity. Language initiatives within the education systems are bringing awareness to the cultural

significance of the students and the world around them. Achieving a sense of identity students demonstrate higher academic achievement.

According to Aguilera and LeCompte, (as cited in Hermes, 2007) “Pioneered in the United States by the Hawaiians, Blackfeet, Navajos, and Mohawks, the Indigenous-immersion method is quickly being recognized as one of the most effective tools for restoring Indigenous language while teaching for Native student academic success” (p. 58). However, it is not the responsibility of the education system alone to nurture the students and sustain the culture, it is also the responsibility of families to reinforce learning inside, as well as, outside of school. “There is substantial evidence that parental involvement is related to higher academic achievement” (Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p. 53). In order to survive as Haudenosaunee people, Haudenosaunee families must fulfill their responsibilities to their children by immersing them in a language and cultural based education both inside and outside the school. Currently, there is no research on the importance of utilizing traditional practices as the foundation of Haudenosaunee language and culture revitalization initiatives. This study will be conducted using the following five open-ended qualitative research questions: 1) Who was the most influential mentor throughout your language and cultural learning experience? 2) What are the critical factors that contributed to your language and culture development and learning experiences? 3) What critical language and cultural components did your mentors expose you to? 4) What factors were necessary to create a successful language and cultural based education? 5) What methods did your mentors utilized to teach you the language and culture?

Setting

Five participants were selected from different longhouse communities across the Haudenosaunee confederacy. The participants shared specific knowledge and characteristics that qualified them for this study. Participants possessed the following: first/second language fluent speakers, who have a strong understanding of the four ceremonies, the good message, great law, medicine societies, oral traditional story telling, creation, condolence, and the roles and responsibilities of all living beings.

Assumptions

The Haudenosaunee, peoples, much like many Indigenous people, believe that all things within the universe are related, and all things have a responsibility and purpose. When students are taught language and culture in an integrated framework, they gain a greater understanding of their purpose in relationship with the universe. The unique culture of the Haudenosaunee is best understood when taught through the unique languages of the Haudenosaunee people, and vice versa. A universal view is achieved when language and culture are integrated. It is assumed that mentors of the participants of this study have instilled in them the unique Haudenosaunee universal worldview, by mentoring the participants using the traditional educational practices of the Haudenosaunee people; participants become adequate representatives of their mentors.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

Participants of this study were unique because they were raised by traditional and knowledgeable elders. The evidence discussed in this study is grounded in the ideas and

experiences of the participants, and it should not be assumed that all elders of the Haudenosaunee people have had the same cultural experiences, nor the same perspective for learning, and teaching.

Definitions

- ILL: Indigenous Language Learning
- Haudenosaunee: A confederacy of six Indigenous nations, which include the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora Nations. The Haudenosaunee are also known as “haudenosaunee” (People of the Long House) (Childs, 1998)
- Language Immersion: An environment where only the target language is spoken.
- Oneida: A federally recognized Native American tribe located in three locations across North America and Canada, one group of Oneida reside in Oneida New York which were the original homelands of the entire Oneida population, Oneida Wisconsin, and Oneida Ontario. The Oneida nation is a part of the Six Nation Confederacy also known as the Haudenosaunee confederacy.
- The Great Law: The message comes from the great law of peace, which brought peace to the Haudenosaunee confederacy. (Childs, 1998) The Great Law emphasizes three principles, which all people should practice in every day life; that being, a good mind, personal strength/power, and peace. (House, 2010)
- Matrilineal: The Haudenosaunee people are matrilineal, which means they follow the lineage of their mother and are given the clan of their mother.
- Turtle Island: The term Native use to identify North America
- Indian: Native American, Indigenous people of the United States

- Kaliwiyo: The good message

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Language is learned most efficiently when it is taught within its own cultural framework. The literature review will focus on five themes. First the literature discusses the relevance of identity. Secondly, the literature focuses on the importance of using a cultural based curriculum. The third theme it suggests language immersion programs are the most productive strategy for language and culture revitalization. The fourth theme describes how teacher characteristics should be consistent with cultural teachings and protocol. The fifth theme discusses family involvement and the significance it has in reclaiming traditional roles and responsibilities, while bringing language and culture into the home and outside the classroom. Finally, the literature will summarize the five themes in relationship to efficient language and cultural based educational practices.

First Theme Subheading: The Relevance of Identity

Haudenosaunee people, much like many other Indigenous people, long for a sense of identity and purpose in this world. Individuals who do not have a strong sense of identity often times fall victim to the dangers found within our society. According to Reyhner (2010) “Students of whatever race or culture who are disconnected from their traditional values are likely in modern America to pick up unhealthy values of consumerism, consumption, competition, comparison and conformity...” (p. 147). Students who have access to their traditional teachings carry with them pride and understanding of the self. All aspects of the student’s life should support and nourish their sense of self. According to the National Indian Brotherhood (1972):

Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his

people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian. (p. 9)

The Haudenosaunee teachings are highly sophisticated and applicable to today's society. They teach many different values guiding the people on how to maintain harmony and balance in relationship with the mind and the world. The Haudenosaunee values are based on an understanding of peace, personal strength, and a good mind (Porter, 2008). When achieved, students foster the ability to apply the teachings in their life in modern society. According to House (2010):

Even more important the principles of the Six Nations are needed today, they are not something old to throw away, the principles of acknowledging relationship within all of creation and working toward the principles of the good message, power and peace are all about globalization. The literature makes it evident that someone's quality of life can be greatly improved through the knowledge of knowing whom you are and using your voice/language to say it. (p. 61)

When students possess a strong sense of purpose, it motivates them to commit themselves to other areas of their life. Reyhner (2010) speculated that the best environment to be is

within modern society. Strong values and principles such as a *good mind, power, and peace* as taught by the *Haudenosaunee values and traditions* are tools, which could be utilized to create a healthier society.

Cultural Based Curriculum

Creating a language-based education is not enough. It is also important to embed traditional cultural teachings, which contribute to providing students with a strong cultural foundation that affirms their identity of who they are as Haudenosaunee people. According to Reyhner (2010) the use of modern academic methods and curriculum to view Indigenous language is not a productive way to reverse assimilation, rather it is simply a new approach to assimilate the Indigenous culture.

Language Immersion Programs

Creating cultural based language immersion programs is the most productive way to achieve language and culture revitalization. “Language immersion programs are part of a growing commitment to traditional native education often initiated by parents and educational professionals seeking an alternative to students’ alienation and high dropout rates in federal or local public schools” (Johansen, 2004, p. 568). Obtaining a sense of belonging within schools has improved the likelihood of attendance and completion rates. Springer (2007) reports that Indigenous peoples are benefiting from language revitalization in other aspects of learning. U.S Senate Byron Dorgan reports that students involved in language revitalization programs are showing greater academic achievement. (Springer, 2007). Critics of immersion programs assume that immersing students in a language other than the mainstream language could hinder ones ability to succeed in

modern academia and mainstream society. However, research found that immersion school students were showing academic success in reading comprehension vocabulary and grammatical knowledge equal to students attending non-immersion education systems. (Johansen, 2004)

When it comes to teaching culture within an educational setting language and cultural immersion has many benefits, it takes as few as one speaker to immediately implement an immersion program within tribally controlled education systems. (Hermes, 2007) The word “immersion” can be intimidating to a community who has experienced a rapid amount of language loss in recent years. Oneida speakers are few and are spread across the Haudenosaunee confederacy which extends from New York to Wisconsin. (House, 2010) In such time of urgency, Haudenosaunee language learners and teachers need to take great risks and leaps towards language and cultural revitalization. As long as there is a teacher willing and able to commit to such the task, language immersion schools are achievable. According to the literature language immersion is the ideal method for creating speakers of the Haudenosaunee languages.

In order to successfully promote and sustain language immersion settings and environments, the curriculum should implement traditional cultural teaching and values of the Haudenosaunee people. The principles of the good message, the good mind, personal power/strength, and peace should influence the culture of the curriculum and all methods and relationships within the school should be a reflection of them (House, 2010).

Teacher Characteristics

In the context of characteristics, knowledge and abilities, Haudenosaunee Educators who teach in culturally based language immersion schools should be grounded in the cultural knowledge and abilities to translate traditional cultural teachings of The Great Law and The Good Message within the curriculum. Educators serve as positive role models who encourage and support their students. The Great Law of Peace is the foundation for Haudenosaunee ethics. The Haudenosaunee values are based on an understanding of the following three principles: peace, strength, and a good mind (Porter, 2008). It was understood by the Haudenosaunee people, that the three principles were given as the original instruction to mankind upon their creation. According to Walker (2004) the Iroquois like most other Indigenous nations, believe in holistic society. Peace emphasizes the importance of equality within interpersonal relationships. The concept of strength is defined as an individual power or the spiritual ability to have righteousness; the Great Law of peace depends upon the personal development of righteousness to contribute to the overall well being of society.

According to Schaeffer, Epting, Zinn, and Buskist (as cited in Jahnangiri & Mucciolo, 2008) “teacher characteristics are most effective when they are “caring, encouraging, approachable, enthusiastic, respectful, knowledgeable, empathetic, passionate, and having a sense of humor” (p. 484). This not only supports effective learning, but also these teachings could be applied to all areas of life and provide consistency which helps students develop a strong sense of identity.

Teachers of an Haudenosaunee language and culture based education should use the principles of the good message to create a comfortable learning setting, which fosters positive perspectives for learning from mistakes and errors. Dulay and Burt (1974) highlighted that immersion teachers should be careful to never discourage learners from making mistakes within the target language. It is important to emphasize to students that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. According to Dulay and Burt (1974):

“Children do not simply imitate adult speech; they structure it and create rules of their own that are simpler than adult rules. In time, the “mismatch” between the child’s developing forms and the developed forms of adult grammar diminishes and disappears, without the help of explicit instruction, positive reinforcement of correct structures, or correction of incorrect structures.” (p. 123)

Indigenous educators who teach culturally based language immersion programs highlight the importance that all learners have different needs and expectations and teachers should do their best to accommodate all learners and learning styles. Findings in qualitative research done by Jahangiri and Mucciolo (2008) suggested that the participants who were students, valued most of the content for which they learned. This suggests that content design, content organization, and content development should be teachers' top concern. However, when professionals are in a learning environment they value most the self-confidence and expertise of the instructor.

“The fact that differences exist between the groups (students and professionals) suggests that the development of teaching effectiveness strategies should be audience-specific.” (p. 491)

Language and Culture Revitalization is very challenging and immersion could be intimidating to second language learners. However, if an encouraging, supportive, and healthy, learning environment is achieved; learners may be able to adapt to complex subjects and may be capable of achieving great heights. Research done by Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) supported that teachers should focus on creating a “humanistic and student-friendly environment” rather than delivering a simple curriculum to students. Walker (2004) suggests that in accordance of the Great Law all individuals should be treated with equal respect.

Creating a successful Haudenosaunee Language and Cultural based education goes beyond immersing students within the target language. Identity of the self is achieved through providing students with a culturally based language immersion program of study. According to Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001):

Students are motivated and stimulated not simply by the level of difficulty, tension, and expectations in the course, but also by the quality of materials and activities that truly challenge their cognitive abilities and contribute to the satisfactory development of their L2 personalities. (p. 274)

Family Involvement

Hermes (2007) emphasized that "...using a language in school does not ensure revitalization; it is only a start" (p. 62). To achieve language and cultural revitalization, Indigenous people must take it one step further. Families who are not knowledgeable of the target language may have concern that sending their children to an immersion based school would be challenging because they would not be able to understand, or assist their children in their learning. Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan (as cited in Henderson & Mapp, 2002) reported:

This is similar to difficulties experienced by other monolingual families whose children attend bilingual programs. For example, being able to help their children with homework was the biggest worry for monolingual English-speaking parents of students in a Spanish-English program. (p. 54)

A solution to this limitation further supports the importance of family involvement within the school. Though it is the case that education systems create an environment for learning and understanding where "...the attention of both teacher and child is focused on language structure, much of what is taught in class is not learned and much of what is learned was not taught in class" (Dulay & Burt 1974, p. 135). This step would include ensuring that the families of the students are also committed, supportive, learners of the language and culture as well so that students are continuously being immersed in the language and culture.

Arenas, Reyes, and Wyman (2007) support family involvement with language revitalization by emphasizing that a school will have a much more challenging task when the threatened language has not been acquired as a mother tongue in the home prior to beginning school, or not used out of school, or upon graduation. This supports the need for families to value an understanding for the Haudenosaunee language and culture and the importance of learning along side their children in order to provide consistency within the child's learning and understanding of the language and culture.

Yamauchi, Lau-Smith, and Luning (2008) quoted a parent of a student at the Kaiapuni Hawaiian Immersion school, "I feel that he's centered because he knows... what he's learning in school is the same thing he's learning at home. And we work closely with Kaiapuni values and our own values together. So he's surrounded. He's very centered" (p. 49). In order to achieve language and culture revitalization, it appears that Haudenosaunee communities needs to revisit their roles as men and women and the responsibilities to their children in accordance to their traditional values consistent with their Indigenous language. Similar to many Indigenous nations, the understanding of family for the Haudenosaunee people goes beyond immediate members, families are organized through a clan system, which is a structure for positive and appropriate interaction within the community, according to Reyhmer (2010), this type of structure stems from the native language of the people. (p.145)

According Joseph (2010) suggests in order to achieve the curriculum for sustaining Indigenous cultures it is necessary to view the school as a part of the community. The school should be encourage and welcome parents, family members, and community members to be apart of the students education in any way possible. Students

have a need for both communal and family support in the development of their traditional identity. Demmert (1974) suggests that nurturing both language development, and physical and social mother-child relationships are critical components that contribute to a child's overall well being. A parent or family member working along side their children in immersion programs helps to ensure that the child's learning is supported, consistent, and fluent within all aspects of life.

Summary

Evidence appears to support that Haudenosaunee identity is sustained through Haudenosaunee language and culture. Following this assumption, it appears that Haudenosaunee people need to reclaim the traditional responsibility to the children, by rebuilding an educational system grounded in Haudenosaunee language and culture. There is evidence that identity is developed through the understanding of ones Indigenous language and culture. There has also been evidence that there is an increase in academic success through language and cultural immersion. However, Reyhner (2010) suggests: "While academic knowledge and test scores are important, it is students behavior towards others that is a paramount importance because it is determinant of how individuals use the knowledge they have gained" (p. 147).

Immersion curriculum therefore needs to consistently emulate both the traditional language and culture. The principles of the great message, a good mind, personal strength/power, appear to be directly related to creating environment in the classroom as well as in the home. These are critical components for the curriculum to

flourish. The need to create a healthy environment, which fosters positive perspectives for learning, is critical for the survival of the Haudenosaunee people; this can be achieved by utilizing the traditional principles of the Haudenosaunee people. Furthermore, it appears that supporting the children to learn their Indigenous language also supports and adheres to understanding traditional Haudenosaunee roles and responsibilities of the family. All of these components are critical to the survival of a nation through the rebuilding of the Haudenosaunee family and cultural values by revitalizing and sustaining the traditional language. Like most Indigenous people, Haudenosaunee people link language as the critical identifier for their nationhood. Without language it becomes questionable whether one could truly be Haudenosaunee (Reyhner, 2010).

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodology that was used to gather and analyze the data of five traditional Haudenosaunee men and woman who were raised in a unique traditional setting where they have successfully developed expert knowledge in their traditional specific Haudenosaunee language and culture. First, this chapter delineates the research design that was used in this study; secondly, the chapter will describe the unique characteristics of the participants selected for this study. Finally the chapter goes on to explain the development of the study, which will include the process that was used to collect and analyze the data.

Research Design

The Haudenosaunee people pass cultural information through oral traditions. It is fitting that this study be qualitative in nature, with questions will be asked to direct the participant toward the purpose of this study, while also offering an opportunity to elaborate on and create their own themes. A qualitative approach was most appropriate in capturing the traditional practices of the Haudenosaunee people.

Setting and Participants

Participants were selected from various longhouse communities across the Haudenosaunee confederacy using Homogeneous sampling the researcher has intentionally chosen participants of membership or subgroup based on shared characteristics (Creswell, 2014). Three leaders were identified from the Oneida longhouse whom travel throughout the confederacy. These three leaders were asked for recommendations of participants who fit the following criteria: Participants must have

fluent language proficiency (in their specific Haudenosaunee language); participants may be first or second language speakers; participants must have expert knowledge and understanding about the four ceremonies, the good message, the great law, medicine societies, oral traditional story telling, creation, condolence, and the traditional roles and responsibilities of the Haudenosaunee people. Recommended participants have been screened based on their formal participation within the confederacy, which includes: Traveling to various long houses across the confederacy; attending the four ceremonies; practicing ethics based on the good message and the great law; actively participating in ceremonial societies; and making efforts to teach, maintain and revitalize traditional cultural components within their community. Participants must also be located within an 800-mile radius from Principal Investigator (PI). Six people were identified through this process. Selecting participants from various nations within the Haudenosaunee confederacy was important to gather different points of view, different teachings, and practices, that could have changed or been lost due to colonization.

Six participants were identified through inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the six, five participants were selected utilizing the screening process. The sixth participant was excluded based on the 800-mile radius criteria. The participants included three male, and two females, who ranged from the ages of 30 years and older. Upon selecting participants, the researcher followed traditional Haudenosaunee protocol utilizing oral traditions to seek permission from the participant. The PI traveled to each of the participant's territories to conduct the interview. The PI allowed for the participant to select a location where they were most comfortable in meeting. Four out of five participants chose to interview within their homes and the fifth chose a local coffee shop. The participant read the consent form to the participant in order to introduce the purpose of the research, the potential benefits, and

risks to participants of the study. Once in agreement, the participants signed the consent form stating they understood all of the above.

Measures

The methods used to collect the data were one-on-one interviews with five participants, using five open-ended questions. The five questions were the following: 1) who was the most influential mentor throughout your language and cultural learning experience? 2) What are the critical factors that contributed to the participant's language and culture expertise? 3) What critical language and cultural components did your mentors expose you to? 4) What factors were necessary to create a successful language and cultural based education? 5) What methods did your mentors utilized to teach you the language and culture?

Data Gathering and Analysis

Participants were identified using their traditional Haudenosaunee name, title, clan, and nation. The face-to-face interviews were conducted within a two-hour time period. The interviews were audiotaped using a tape recorder, notes were taken during the time of the interview, and the recording was then transcribed. A follow up over-the-phone interview was conducted a week preceding the initial face-to-face interview, to allow for participants to expand upon their initial responses, however, all five participants of the study chose not to expand upon their initial interview. The transcriptions were then organized by the researcher and reviewed on various occasions to organize information,

which was then labeled with codes and again organized into common themes used to support the purpose of this study.

Summary

The methodology of this study was chosen specifically to respectfully meet the traditional protocol of obtaining information according to the beliefs and practices of the Haudenosaunee people. The research question “Are Haudenosaunee languages learned more efficiently within a culturally based framework?” was addressed by a qualitative research design, of the five representative participants using homogenous sampling. The development of the study was an on going process which involved a continuous process of collecting and analyzing data to answer five questions, to support the research question and purpose of this study.

Results and Discussion

Chapter Four: Presentation and Analysis of the Data

The objective of this study was to explore the question; is language learned more efficiently if it is taught within its own cultural framework? The participants were selected based on their active role within the confederacy, the level of fluency in their specific language, their cultural knowledge, and their efforts toward language and culture revitalization. The participants varied in ages from 30 to 80 years old.

Participants were selected from various communities and nations across the Haudenosaunee confederacy. As the study was conducted, one feature that all participants shared throughout the reporting was that they contribute their expertise and knowledge to being raised by their mentor. In all cases their mentor was a member of their family and a first language speaker. All of the participants agreed to be identified by their Ukwehuhwe (original people) name, Nation, clan, and title (if applicable). The following include Gahegaga who carries an Onondaga name, but is Mohawk, from the Bear Clan and holds the title of a Faith Keeper. Hoyá'danā:gwa't is Seneca, and from the Turtle Clan. Anahalihs is an Oneida, Bear Clan Chief. Kaliwakélu is an Oneida, Wolf Clan Faith Keeper. Yakohsaniyósta is Oneida, who holds a title of a Wolf Clan, Clan Mother. Traditionally the Haudenosaunee people did not inherit a last name; rather the Haudenosaunee inherit a clan from their mother. As a result, the participants of this study are identified in the following chapters using only their Ukwehuhwe name.

The interview questions were used as a format for dialogue, however the responses are not reported in a question/answer format. The data is organized by the

emerging themes, which happened to be consistent with literature review, where it referenced the oral tradition practiced by the Haudenosaunee. Quotations from participants are direct quotes made through oral communication, transcribed into written format by the PI. No editing has been done to the statements to hold true to the unique thought process of the participants.

In order to report the results it is necessary to first share a traditional story told by an interviewee to demonstrate the oral tradition practiced by the Haudenosaunee. A common occurrence between all interviews was the use of traditional story telling. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and organized into common themes organized to follow the themes within the literature review. First, the report will discuss topics related to relevance of identity; secondly, culturally based curriculum; third, teacher characteristics; and finally, family involvement. One of the elders that participated in this study, Anahalis, captured all of these components through one of the many stories his grandmother shared with him.

One story of the seven dancers I remember when I was younger. When I was little, you know like when you are outside in the wintertime? You know, back home it's much more clear. You can see the stars and all of a sudden you see a flash through the sky like what you call a falling star. I told my grandmother about that. She said, "You seen that"? Not right away, not right at that moment. At that moment she didn't say anything, she kind of just acknowledged it.

Then a few days later she said, "Remember the other night when you seen that star or that flash that went across the sky?" She said, "There was a time back

when everything was still new yet and people had villages here and there. There was this one boy who they say had magical powers. He had his friends that were with him. And so, his friends that were with him they were always doing stuff together playing around all the time and here and there it's sort of a prelude to all the ceremonies.

So she told me this one boy this one day as they were all gathered around playing together he says, "We're going to have a feast so I want each of you to go home and ask your parents for certain items". One had to get beans, one corn, one had to get meat... or berries, you know different things.

There were eight of them, him and seven others and they were all together. Each of them went back home and asked for these things, but come to find out the mothers they kinda got upset with the kids. "There's no reason for you to be taking food some place else. What's this feast all about? They would say their friend that they're with told them they're going to have a feast and to them it was just something that they would do to get together. Some of the mothers, not all, but some would say well quit playing with that boy anyway he's not right.

When they all got back together again, he asked, "Well, who was able to get some of the things for the feast?" most of them didn't get anything because their mothers said there was no need for them to take it somewhere else. They were refused. Some of them said, "because it was you who was asking for food our mothers thought, maybe your no good, maybe there's something different about you."

He went on to say, “We’ll still go on with our feast and do what we can”. And so they did. They told them, “For this number of days you know when we get back together we will do this”. And so it was, they all got back together. So they had this little feast and he told them now he took out this drum and he said, “That we’re going to do this dance and it’s a very special dance it is a part of our feast. We begin to dance around we will dance and first it will start out slow a little bit then it will start to become faster and we’re going to dance as hard as we can. As we’re dancing you will begin to notice that your feet they won’t be touching the ground any more because we will be dancing so hard”.

Then, they started dancing around. As they started, they started going a little faster and as soon as they started feeling light, he told them, “As we’re dancing don’t look down for any reason because it’ll stop our dance. We won’t go any more, if you look down. Keep on looking up into the sky and continue to dance”.

So then they started, and as they were dancing they were going up and up and up. All of a sudden all the people in their village, they could hear this music. They could hear this hollering carrying on and someone having fun or whatever. So some of the mother and parents are looking around for where is that noise coming from.

They were looking around and one said, “Look above the trees”. They could see those boys dancing around in a circle. They kept going higher. Then the mothers started to recognize their boys so they rushed over to where they were dancing in

that area. They saw where they had their feast and they started going further up and up. They started crying calling them back. They were sorry. They were feeling bad because they didn't provide the things they were asking for.

Now they were being remorseful... for not doing what they had asked of them before. They kept on going. There was a mother that was crying so badly and the one boy could hear her. His mother, she wanted him to come back so he was feeling bad. He didn't want her to leave so they were going really high so he felt bad so he looked back to see where he was and where she was. Just as soon as he looked down, he fell and he fell down, right underneath the ground.

They say that is where the elm tree came from. That's where he went through the ground and afterwards that's where the tree began to grow. He also became that falling star. That's how she related that story to the seven dancers so they kept on going. When we have our ceremonies, that is what they looked to, it's high in the sky during the winter time they are right in the middle of the sky during that time... "So I mean there are those kinds of stories in the language and culture. (Anahalis, personal communication, March 11, 2015).

Relevance of Identity

One theme that emerged through the interview process was the relevance of identity and the role it plays in one's ability to perform. Anahalihs states: It is very critical at this point that we begin to focus on doing a lot more of the language and culture with the children. Especially with the little ones when they are born. You have to be right there to instruct them to give the language. In doing so, this is where their foundation begins to

have a strong understanding of our ways, and as they grow then they begin to build upon that foundation into various things that they are able to do.”

Kaliwakélu shared a story about his experience working with Indigenous youth, and the importance of teaching the youth how to give thanks to the natural world. Addressing the natural world in the Indigenous language helps children feel the connection between themselves and the natural world. As a group of them gathered to give thanks to the trees, a visitor from another nation offered to sing a song in honor of the trees. After singing a translated English version of the song, Kaliwakélu had asked him to share the song again in his Indigenous language. The visitor warned him that the youth wouldn’t understand the song; yet, Kaliwakélu encouraged him to go on and assured him that even though students would not understand the words they would understand the purpose and be able to relate through a sense of feeling.

As the visitor began to sing, an eagle flew above the group and circled over them so close they could reach out and touch it, Kaliwakélu said, “See the difference? You were singing in English, that eagle would have never come. But when you sing in your language that eagle came, because he knows the difference... nature knows the difference” (Kaliwakélu Personal Communication, March 2015). The youth celebrated the experience and it was evident the connection they had felt between themselves, and the natural world.

Second language learner Hoyá’danā:gwa’t described his language and culture learning experience to be life changing. He stated, “Now that I can understand pretty much every word in the longhouse, it’s a major difference. When I began to understand

more of the language, it changed the way I lived” (Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

The universal view of the traditional Haudenosaunee is something to be maintained. The best way to preserve the unique universal view of the Haudenosaunee is to experience the culture through the original language and vice versa. Kaliwakélu gave an example by describing how there is no word for death in his language. Death doesn’t exist, what it is to “die” in the English speaking world, means to the Haudenosaunee, to prepare to begin a new journey. (Kaliwakélu Personal Communication, March 2015). Kaliwakélu went on to ask, “How do you write that down for someone to read? If you did...would they really understand the concept of that?” (Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015).

Anahalis described how the critical factors that contributed to his life had been the origins of the ceremonies. He described the importance of understanding those origins because through understanding the origins of the ways, learners will begin to link various components with them. Thus, having a better understanding of the world around them. He described a pattern to learning and how it begins with the creation story, then goes on to the ceremonies and how they are used to give gratitude to all things around us. Through this process, you will begin to understand various components within the formation of the confederacy. The Kanyalankowa (the great law), and later another message of survival brought to us during a time of great turmoil, the kaliwiyo (the good message). With these teachings as a core, Anahalis explained how these specific teachings become instrumental in one’s everyday learning experience. Whether one is

learning medicine, measurement, trades or skills. Anahalis went on to explain how the teachings also relate to one's interpersonal relationships by stating:

It also addresses how you relate yourself not only with your family, but also your clan and other nations that you are a part of the confederacy. There are all these kinds of components that all tie together. As you learn and continue on in life, how you interact with that learning and teaching as well as others around you. These are the various things that are all apart of that component of that learning as we go on. (Anahalis, Personal Communication, March 2015).

Cultural Based Curriculum

A common theme found within the data suggested that culturally based curriculum must be taught through the Haudenosaunee perspective of time, place, and manner. Data suggest that curriculum should be taught using the traditional language within the cultural framework. Lessons should go accordingly with the yearly ceremonial cycle. Kaliwakélu shared his experience with curriculum planning, he said "we were thinking we could have curriculum like they have in everyday school. Then we realized we couldn't do that, it wasn't going to work." (Kaliwakélu Personal Communication, March 2015).

All participants in the study shared many stories about the original methods, the Haudenosaunee used to teach. The original methods used for teaching and learning amongst the Haudensaunee people happened in a natural environment where real life experiences held underlying lessons. This method showed to be successful theme within the data. Participants shared stories about the methods that they or their mentor had

experienced. Hoyá'danā:gwa't reported two methods that his mentor thought had greatly contributed to their learning experience. Hoyá'danā:gwa't mentor told of a time when learning came from sitting inside a circle of women who gathered to make baskets and various crafts. The women would place all their children and grandchildren in the center of the circle where they would collectively tell stories and speak to the children, Hoyá'danā:gwa't stated, "my grandmother would always refer back to that to how julia would make her sit inside this circle of women making baskets and thats how she would learn a lot" (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Kaliwakélu contributed his success for language and cultural expertise to the type of lifestyle that he had experienced growing up. Kaliwakélu described how learning is best practiced through action. Times were different in those 'days; conversation wasn't done the way it is today. At the time of his upbringing, there was a much greater sense of communal contribution. Community members worked collectively, assisting one another in daily chores. This was an ideal time for deliberation and instruction. Aside from feeding the brain, mentors would also feed their students in return for their help.

When we came to visit. We knew we were going to work. We couldn't sit down and just use the brain, because there is nothing in there. In the language everything is an action. Everything's a verb. You know there are no nouns in our culture? It isn't to think about, it's what your doing and how your doing.

(Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015).

Kaliwakélu went on to explain, "there wasn't any of that of going sitting around and not doing anything, there was a lot of getting together and being involved" (Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015).

Gahegag provided supporting evidence that these methods were highly productive. She described how the sense of community was much stronger when she was learning. Everyone helped one another and worked together, and when they did so, they did it in their native tongue. (Gahegag, personal communication, March 28, 2015)

Gahegag explained, “when they did that, the language was given to them because they just heard it” (Gahegag, personal communication, March 28, 2015) This method was very affective for Gahegag, by being nurtured in that environment as a young girl. To this day, she is able to remember over hearing various traditional content being mentioned.

Yakohsaniyósta also shared her experience learning language through cultural activities such as basket making and gardening. She described how seventy years ago it was common to learn through action and it seemed effortless. It was as simple as speaking nothing but their native language. Gahegag shared how when her mentor would babysit they would share stories, and speak to the children entirely in their native language. (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

Anahalis described that learning cultural content was deliberately not taught (Anahalis, Personal Communication, March 2015). Subjects arose from year-around, every day occurrences. Anahalis suggested that being taught in a natural environment with fluent speakers, made for educational best practices. He reminisced how his grandmother taught him by stating “Learning becomes engrained, she told me stories, and she only told me one time and that was it.” (Anahalis, Personal Communication, March 2015).

There are various ways to satisfy the traditional western curriculum within a traditional Haudenosaunee cultural framework. Gahegaga has had experience homeschooling a group of second grade students. The curriculum that she found to be most effective is learning the cultural components, and the connection between the natural world around them and western curriculum. Gahegaga stated “for their counting and all that stuff we did like number of corn, number of beans, and that’s got practical use in the longhouse because they do count the beans... so I thought it turned out good. So I think we should go back to that” (Gahegaga, personal communication, March 28, 2015). She went on to describe how all cultural components have a connection between western education requirements and learning in a natural environment helps to better enforce their learning, making their learning experience more memorable, relatable, and applicable.

Teacher Characteristics

Oral teachings tell that the Great Law had emerged during a time of great turmoil, it was said that the creator had looked down upon earth and had seen the rivers flowing red with blood and all across the earth was turmoil from war. It was then that the creator had sent a messenger, known as the Peace Maker, to restore the three principles that they were originally intended to live by. (Anahalis, personal communication, March 11, 2015).

The three principles are defined by Anahalis as the following. Peace is a life long act of unconditional love for all and everything. It is to use the most gentle words, to be compassionate, supportive, and understanding. Strength is a mental and spiritual ability

to have and obtain self-rightousness. A good mind is defined as a state of being in which one has the ability to address and respond to situations in a positive and productive manner (Anahalis, Personal Communication, March 2015). The data describe the relationship between the principles of *The Great Law* in following teacher characteristics: Caring Encouraging approachable, enthusiastic respectful, knowledgeable, empathetic (addressing mistakes), passionate, and an appropriate sense of humor.

Kaliwakélu shares his experience being raised in the traditional setting. He describes how teachings of The Great Law and Kaliwiyo didn't need to be taught in a formal context, because they lived it. Kaliwakélu said: "It all comes back to just being human. The best way I can put it of what Kaliwiyo or great law is about is if you take the traditional teachings of your people, and incorporate those teachings into your life, you will see what you are capable of." (Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015).

Kaliwakélu describes the environment which he grew up in to be much more communal and caring. Functioning as a community required gathering together to discuss the needs of the people, caring came daily and without praise or monetary exchange, there were daily routines where everyone contributed to helping the elders. Young people were never forced into caring for or learning from the elders, it was just something that was necessary for the sake of survival.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't talks about how his grandmother was very strict "It was having to work hard to survive... that is why the old people didn't show a lot of love and patience. If you didn't do something right away there was a chance that you would not survive" (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Yakohsaniyósta also spoke about how she was never forced into learning, yet she states: “She just wanted me to learn, I was the only one. She put everything on me to learn” (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

Yakohsaniyósta emphasizes how as a fluent speaker of the language, she too learns along with her students, she says, “I’m not teaching you, I’m learning with you”. (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

Hoyá’danā:gwa’t expresses how his devotion and dedication stemmed from the amount of respect he had for his mentor. He said: “I didn’t want to disappoint her. I would always do my best.” (Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Kaliwakélu describes a time where respecting elders and title holders was automatic, he said that as a child he wasn’t disciplined because he feared his mentor, Kaliwakélu describes fear as the following: “Fear did not mean “to be afraid”, fear is where you don’t want to disrespect anyone. It’s not being afraid of them, it’s not fear in the English language. It is respect.” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). Anahalis explains how what his mentor has taught him about respect was to always being mindful of everything and everyone around you. Hoyá’danā:gwa’t recalls his mentor gathering her children around the well to give thanks to the water before receiving it.

Kaliwakélu describes his mentor as being very empathetic with him, some days when Kaliwakélu would go to work and learn from his mentor he would fall asleep, and his mentor would say “let him sleep, he is going to be here tomorrow anyways. He will get it tomorrow, if he don’t get it today” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March

27, 2015). However, other children he would send them outside when they fell asleep from sitting too long.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't expresses how his success as a second language speaker came from immersing himself entirely in the Seneca language and culture. Hoyá'danā:gwa't spent his alone time studying audio recordings, and documentation; his free time was largely spent in the home of his mentor completely immersed in language and cultural activity.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't describes his mentor as being passionate about his learning, she provided him with the necessary learning tools to use as in his spare time. She also opened up her home to him to learn. She was passionate about his success so she pushed him when necessary. One way she did this was when he made a mistake she would encourage him to start over and try again; repetition was critical to his learning success. YakohsΛniyósta explains how her mentor was notorious for correcting her mistakes, she was adamant but it was always fun. YakohsΛniyósta contributes these practices to her ability to use and teach proper grammar. Similar to Hoyá'danā:gwa't and YakohsΛniyósta's experience, Kaliwakélu also was corrected when making a mistake, however, it was always done in good fun, he states: "never be afraid to make mistakes, how you correct them, that's what you're going to get noted for it" (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). Kaliwakélu emphasizes the importance of making mistakes because you learn from them. He states: "That is how you learn, they'll correct what you say, and how you say it, and that's the best way to learn". (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 2015).

Anahalis describes how his mentor had a way about correcting him when he was out of line, or made a mistake. Anahalis was always given an explanation using different examples for how you should be, she would say “always be respectful toward people because you don’t know what may have happened to them”. Anahalis explained if he continued his actions his mentor would take him directly to that person, and introduce him, so he could see they were no different than anybody else. He stated “it’s almost like then you begin to appreciate people much more rather than standing off to the side”.

Kaliwakélu describes the importance of possessing great humility within the learning environment. Humility comes natural for those who are truly passionate for one another. Kaliwakélu states:

at the end of the day ask yourself who have I hurt have I offended anybody have I hurt myself. We don’t do that we look out there but we don’t look at our selves so that’s what you have to learn how to do more so how what have I felt today has it been a good day all day what was it that bothered me today and then once you kept something there and did u hurt that person with something you said or comments you made. (Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015)

Kaliwakélu emphasizes how our language was used very humorously. There was always laughter in our language, when laughter isn’t present it is then that people start to withdraw from it, and no longer wish to participate. (Kaliwakélu, Personal Communication, March 2015)

Family Involvement

Anahalihs describes the need for family involvement within education. “If it’s one sided that’s what it will be, all one sided. Who are they going to be able to converse with other than the instructor? It has to be side by side within the households”.

YakohsΛniyósta describes an ideal situation where parents learn with their children.

YakohsΛniyósta states that in her community, children are being taught language and culture within the schools but there is no reinforcement within the homes. She states, “What’s missing now is because they are not learning in the home...these kids are getting it in the schools but they come home and it’s quiet.” She talked about the programs for parents to learn, although some parents are not taking advantage of those programs.

Hoyá’danā:gwa’t expresses that language efforts cannot be entirely focused on the parents. Not all parents are going to be able to learn the way their children learn. His idea of bridging the gap between generations of non-speakers and the children learning in revitalization programs is “teach the kids to talk to each other so when they become parents they can start the cycle over again. They can talk to their kids when they go to school and come home. They can know what their kids are saying and they can interact with them in the language”(Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Gahegage educated her daughter in the home throughout the day and reports that she had been very centered because her learning was consistent and supportive., Gahegage emphasized the importance of her role in being present and supportive of her daughters education by stating: “my girl, she talks but I made a mistake when I went back to work”. (Gahegage, personal communication, March 28, 2015).

Another story that Gahegag mentor had told often was how her father would insist on her attending the chief meetings. He would instruct her to listen attentively, until one day she spoke out saying that she didn't belong there. A chief scolded her saying that she should do as her father had instructed. Gahegag reported the chiefs reasoning was, "because some day in the future she's going to have to teach these things". (Gahegag, personal communication, March 28, 2015). There came a time when those same chiefs were no longer on earth, and it was the same young observer who went on to teach.

Discussion

The participants who were interviewed in this study shared their experiences of being raised in a Haudenosaunee cultural framework. When asked the five interview questions, the participants shared similar values, ideas, and experiences with their mentor. The discussion begins by looking at the relevance of identity describing how a strong sense of identity can be linked with the overall success of students. Secondly, the discussion focused on how culturally based learning experiences and the teachings embedded within quotidian learning environments are successful strategies for language and cultural revitalization. Third, the discussion focused on the importance of utilizing the principals of *The Great Law* to maintain positive teacher characteristics. Finally, the need for family involvement was discussed along with the need to reclaim traditional roles and responsibilities for educating the children.

Relevance of Identity

A critical component of a student's ability to succeed is having a strong sense of identity and purpose. Therefore, the support of the student's sense of self-identity and purpose should be consistent across all areas within the student's life.

The foundation that Anahalihs discusses is what Reyhner (2010) describes as the individuals sense of identity. An interesting contrast of the literature review and the data found through this research appeared to support the importance of language and culture. Reyhner (2010) described how individuals who are disconnected from AQ their sense of identity, and lack a language and cultural foundation, will be more vulnerable to the dangers found within the everyday modern world. While participant, Anahalis, supported the importance of having a strong foundation of language and culture to strengthen an individual's overall well-being (Anahalis, personal communication, March 11, 2015).

Kaliwakélu shared the difference between Indigenous culture being practiced in a western language and Indigenous culture being practiced in its original language is an important distinction between language, culture and the natural world. Indigenous people experience a greater sense of purpose when cultural traditions are practiced in the Indigenous language. Language is best understood when used in its traditional cultural framework.

Kaliwakélu interprets the understanding of death according to the Haudenosaunee perspective and describes how the western word for death does not imply the same meaning for the Haudenosaunee perspective. When an Haudenosaunee word is translated into English it loses cultural value. Without understanding the language one cannot truly comprehend the universal view.

Indigenous people experience a greater sense of purpose when cultural traditions are practiced in the indigenous language and reversibly; language is best understood when used in its traditional framework.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't reported that he was able to achieve second language proficiency by being immersed into the language and culture. He described the results of this experience as having a greater understanding of the cultural content. Furthermore, having this experience influence him to make a positive change in the way he lived (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

This data is consistent with the National Indian Brotherhood (1972). When individuals are consistently exposed to the historical background, which shapes them, they will come to a point where their lifetime experiences will have shifted. By being able to fully grasp the concepts and teachings passed down by their ancestors, it is then that they will truly understand the relationship between themselves and the world around them.

Anahalis' experience supports House (2010) recognizing core values, teachings, and beliefs passed down to him by his mentors contributing to the many improvements within his life in a modern world. Anahalihs described the core of what the Haudenosaunee self should understand; the creation, the structure of the confederacy, the principles of the great law and the good message. Anahalihs' statement is consistent with Reyhner's (2010) statement that modern society is an ideal environment for being Indigenous. Traditional principles can be practiced everywhere and anywhere. A strong core is instrumental in building positive relationships and experiences within the universe.

Identity is a critical component to the success of learning individual. The results remain consistent with the literature review suggesting that language and culture work collectively to strengthen one's sense of purpose and identity, which contributes the overall success of a learning individual.

Cultural Based Curriculum

It appears that the differences between English and Haudenosaunee culture limit mainstream methods to teach Haudenosaunee language and culture. According to Reyhner (2010) the use of modern academic methods and curriculum to view Indigenous language is not a productive way to reverse assimilation, rather it is simply a new approach to assimilate the Indigenous culture. Kaliwakélu supported this view by stating, "western curriculum is not an applicable tool for the reclamation of traditional practices" (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). It appears that the learning systems are so different. Mainstream appears to separate everything while the Haudenosaunee keeps the whole system together through their oral story telling. The data suggest that curriculum should be taught using traditional language and cultural framework. Haudenosaunee based educational curriculum is best practiced when lessons are arranged accordingly with the yearly ceremonial cycle. In order to implement a successful language and culture-based education, the data suggest many different methods for immersing students entirely. One must bring language and culture to life through action. The stories that the interviewees had shared within their data are different methods that they felt their mentors had used traditionally. Immersion schooling begins with the children, with story times as mentioned by Anahalihs, and Gahegaga, including

every day survival skills and daily chores as mentioned by Hoyá'danā:gwa't and Yakohsaniyósta. Immersion is creating diverse cultural learning environments where individuals come together and work in communion with one another as mentioned by Kaliwakélu.

The success of language immersion school students was not a focus in this study., However participants still provided evidence that support student success presented in the literature review. Much of the participants contributed their own or their mentors overall success to being immersed in the language and culture of their people.

The benefits and success of immersion seemed to be a consistent theme found within the data. Data suggest that the best practice for learning is in a natural environment. Learning is continuous throughout one's lifetime; therefore, students should be fully immersed in an environment that allows for a lifetime of continuous growth.

The data, which suggest the need for immersion is critical, is consistent with (Hermes, 2007) in the literature review in saying that language immersion is possible for the Haudenosaunee even with the few speakers available. The data suggest that in order to do so, the community must work together to create an environment where everyone contributes their different skills and knowledge, to ultimately become of 'one mind'.

Gahegake suggests that when educating in a language and culture based setting, core subjects in the western education system should be implemented only enough to enhance the every day teachings within the language and culture. (Gahegake, personal communication, March 28, 2015) student's success with this type of learning provides support to House (2010) in the literature review, where she states the culture of the

curriculum should focus on the teachings of the Haudenosaunee, and all other components within education should be products of the teachings themselves.

In order for revitalization programs to work efficiently, students must be immersed in the language and culture entirely. All topics should correlate with the essence of Haudenosaunee universal view. Even with few fluent speakers, immersion can be implemented if the community comes together to support one another. If students learn through a traditional cultural framework will develop a strong sense of identity and have a healthier learning experience with an understanding of the universe around them. These findings are consistent with Springer (2007) findings that reported how language revitalization efforts, contribute to their overall learning experience.

Teacher Characteristics

The results of the study suggest that teachers should demonstrate consistent use of the principles of *The Great Law*. The data found within the study also highlight characteristics for best teacher practices. Jahnangiri and Mucciolo (2008) suggest that teachers should be “caring, encouraging, approachable, enthusiastic, respectful, knowledgeable, empathetic, passionate, and have a sense of humor”. The data collected from participants in this study support Jahnangiri and Mucciolo views concerning best teacher characteristics that contribute and support students’ success in language learning and identity development.

Traditional ethical principles of the Haudenosaunee do not necessarily need to be taught in a curriculum form, rather curriculum should be taught through the use of consistent traditional ethical practice. Kaliwakélu provides emphasis that caring is a

critical component to the survival and reclamation of traditional practices. For the sake of survival one has no other choice than have it in their nature to be caring. (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). Hoyá'danā:gwa't describes his grandmother as being very strict, but explains her strict nature was not to be cruel or demanding, but necessary for means of survival. YakohsΛniyósta also mentioned how her mentor ensured that YakohsΛniyósta was acquiring her language, YakohsΛniyósta describes how her grandmother was adamant but not forceful. The way in which Kaliwakélu, Hoyá'danā:gwa't and YakohsΛniyósta, describe their mentors' characteristics provides evidence to the literature review stating that caring characteristics are critical for best teaching practices and student success. However, the data suggest that because the decline of the language and culture of the Haudenosaunee is in a state of urgency, it is important for parents, educators, and community in general to gain an increased understanding about the importance of caring and take more pro-active approaches to learn and pass on the culture and language for the survival of Haudenosuane communities.

Being approachable was another teacher characteristic considered a best practices for teaching. One of the stories that YakohsΛniyósta shared as a teacher was the importance of humility and understanding that the student/teacher relationship is equal and that both roles are continuously learning.

Participants from this study have shown much respect for their mentors. The data signified that having respect comes from showing respect. Hoyá'danā:gwa't contributed his determination to the amount of respect that he had for his mentor. When Kaliwakélu

clarifies the difference between fear and respect it becomes evident that the fear to disappoint someone who the student respected and someone who respected the student. Respect was a main component of Haudenosaunee culture; the Haudenosaunee were considerate of all things within creation. Giving gratitude and thanks is a strong cultural component of the culture. These are the type of characteristics that Haudenosaunee continue to practice and earn respect. Kaliwakélu states that, “People are going to remember you by how you take care of yourself, and how you take care of the people”

Kaliwakélu describes how he developed a strong relationship with his mentor. Kaliwakélu’s mentor saw the devotion and persistence in his learning, his mentor showed Kaliwakélu empathy by allowing him to learn at his own pace, which resulted in Kaliwakélu’s ability to have such a positive learning experience. This data supports that showing empathy in the learning setting creates a more positive response, not only did Kaliwakélu feel comfortable returning the next day, but he also felt a sense of appreciation for his mentor’s empathy throughout his life.

Individuals who are eager to learn and possess a strong devotion are able to utilize their Indigenous language and culture in nearly any and all settings and situations. Data collected from second language learner Hoyá’danā:gwa’t provides evidence which suggests that when individuals are willing and devoted to the restoration of their Indigenous language and culture they will do 24 hours 7 days a week. “As a second language learner you have to be committed 24/7. It is critical for all learners, and especially second language learners to have the willingness and devotion towards their learning efforts.” (Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication. March 3, 2015)

According to Hoyá'danā:gwa't the amount of passion that his mentor had for his learning contributed to his gaining knowledge and positive perspective on both learning, and teaching. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015). A common theme within the data was that often the most influential person in the participants' lives were those who corrected the participant's mistakes. Each participant contributed their success to their mentors' ability to positively correct mistakes that the participant had made as a learner. Mentors proved to show passion for their students learning by taking the time to address their students' mistakes. Hoyá'danā:gwa't YakohsΛniyósta and Kaliwakélu all describe how their mentor always made sure correcting mistakes was fun, they were taught that making mistakes was inevitable and something that was not meant to be feared,. Kaliwakélu describes how the mentality for Haudenosaunee people was that errors made for the best learning opportunities. A powerful phrase that stood out in the data was Kaliwakélu 's statement; "Never be afraid to make mistakes, how you correct them, thats what your going to get noted for". (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). This statement was a mere reflection of the Haudenosaunee cultural perspective on passion. Another cultural practice for learning and correcting errors was described by Anahalihs. Instead of blatantly correcting mistakes it was often practice to address errors using storytelling. The oral traditional storytelling with explanation was a positive way to address issues or errors because it allowed the student to understand from different perspectives without responding negatively. The data suggests that being passionate is to be aware of ones self and their surroundings.

One's ability to look within themselves to determine what changes need to be made in order for learning to flourish is a vital component for best learning practices.

The data given by both Anahalihs and Kaliwakélu provides evidence that the most productive learning environment happens when teachers maintain a sense of humility, and passion.

Being passionate is a traditional Haudenosaunee way to guide youth. Students, who are taught within the cultural framework, are more able to develop ethics, which will transfer to ethical practice within all areas of life.

The data again supports Jahnangiri & Mucciolo's statement for teacher characteristics. Kaliwakélu emphasized how the culture of his Haudenosaunee language was to be humorous. Humor is very much a part of the culture of the Haudenosaunee. Humor is something that helped the people cope, learn, and relate with the world around them. When the people forgot how to laugh in the language is when the culture for learning was impaired. Laughter makes learning fun and inviting, and also leaves students feeling positive about learning.

Consistent with Jahnangiri & Mucciolo (2008) the data collected by the participants of this study suggest that teachers should be "caring, encouraging, approachable, enthusiastic, respectful, knowledgeable, empathetic, passionate, and have a sense of humor". The data shows that teacher characteristics contribute considerably to student success. The difference between the literature and the data was that participants seemed to view their mentor as knowledgeable as a result of their ability to be; encouraging, approachable, enthusiastic, respectful, empathetic, passionate and sense of humor characteristics. Participants recognized knowledge as a result that is holistic, rather than a characteristic. Participants of the study credited their ability to learn to their mentors. Each participant seemed unable to describe the characteristics of their mentors

without giving an example of the type of experiences their mentor had exposed them to, and the influence that it had on them. The data collected from all participants suggested that the way in which their mentor was consistent in the manner they expressed or shown their knowledge. The data suggested that teachers who are adamant and consistent with their characteristics are most respected, and accomplished as teachers.

Family Involvement

Hermes (2007) recognizes the limitations to language and culture immersion initiatives. She suggests that implementing language and culture within the school system is only a beginning for revitalization. Families need to support language and culture consistency within the homes in order to bridge the gap between initiative and revitalization. The data supports Hermes' theory showing evidence that language and culture is best practiced within it's own cultural framework.

The data suggests that learning in a natural setting and in sync with the natural environment is necessary to promote Haudenosaunee cultural perspective within the curriculum. These results are consistent with with the literature review(Dulay & burt 1974). The Haudenosaunee cultural framework recognizes that all natural elements within the natural world have a role and responsibility in this world. The Haudenosaunee cultural framework not only recognizes but also acknowledges all natural elements by giving thanksgiving address. The thanksgiving address acknowledges everything in the universe and emphasizes the relationships evident in the whole system. The data provides strong evidence that the roles and responsibilities of the Haudenosaunee women were to care for the family and provide them a strong sense of identity, survival and intellectual

abilities. Participants of the study reported on how important the woman who mentored them were. It was also common that the woman exposed them to various mentors both men/woman throughout the confederacy. The literature review (Hagen & House, 1995) supports these findings.

Today there is a great need for Haudenosaunee woman to reclaim their responsibilities to the extended family by making the commitment to provide consistent support for their children's language and cultural based education. The literature review reports Arenas, Reyes, and Wyman (2007) theory that learning along side their children is important to successful language and culture revitalization to ensure that language is implemented before school, at school, after school, and so on. Anahalis strengthens the literature review by suggesting that teachers give students the learning tools, because regardless of their ability to learn they must be there to support their children in the learning process.

Yakohsaniyósta identifies that one limitation for language and cultural education is that it's not being practiced within the home (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015). The problem is many adults were not exposed to the language and culture earlier in life. As a result they are unable to provide a home where language and culture is reinforced. Hoyá'danā:gwa't suggests by focusing on the children of this generation it would also greatly improve the generations to come. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Gahegage's experience in educating her daughter is similar to the example of the family at Kaiapunni Hawaiian Immersion School, by Yamauchi, Lau-Smith, and Luning (2008). While surrounded in language and culture within the home Gahegage reports that

her daughter was very centered in her learning. Unfortunately, Gahegagage had to return to work, later realizing how much her daughters learning had digressed. (Gahegagage, personal communication, March 28, 2015). Gahegagage memoirs of her mentor encouraging the attendance of chief meetings demonstrates the people's roles and responsibilities to nurture the children's intellectual growth, as stated by House (2010)

The literature review explains how the roles and responsibilities of the family go beyond immediate members; the data provides evidence that supports this theory. When participants were asked "who was the most influential mentor throughout your language and cultural learning experience?" they answered the following: Hoyá'danä:gwa't: "My grandmother", Anahalis: "My grandmother, I was raised by her from the time I was 6 months old", Yakohsaniyósta: "My grandmother, because my mom and dad worked", Kaliwakélu: Tholekum my grandfather, and many others I was raised by my grandparents" Gahegagage: "my grandmother, and grandfather, and in later years my mother, but my mother was a working mother so she wasn't home to do one on one teachings so I would say my grandmother". Participants of this study were chosen based on their language and culture expertise. It wasn't until the study was conducted that the similarities between participants emerged. The data suggest that supportive, consistent, and fluent family involvement largely contributed to the overall success of each of the participants.

In a broad perspective this study signifies that language is most useful and best learned within all elements of the traditional cultural framework, and reversibly, culture is best practiced when spoken and understood within the target language.

The significance of this study in a more focused sense is to create awareness and encourage Haudenosaunee people to reclaim their roles and responsibilities to the children of the confederacy to ensure that the future generations are both cultured and nurtured.

The study is important because there is little research that focuses on language and culture revitalization and the need for family involvement. The study set out to provide evidence that language is best taught within it's own cultural framework. While providing evidence that in order to recreate the cultural framework for which it is taught, families need to reclaim their responsibilities to the children and future generations through language and culture education.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine the following research question: *Are Haudenosaunee languages learned more efficiently within a culturally based framework?* The participants of this study were chosen based upon their ability to perform Haudenosaunee language and cultural practices. Participants were selected from various nations within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The interview questions were used as a format to create dialogue between the researcher and the participants. The data reported by participants was then organized into themes relevant to language and cultural based educational practices. The previous chapter of the report provided the data and discussion consistent with the literature review. This chapter will first discuss the significant findings that have been identified as the following four themes: relevance of identity, culturally based curriculum, teacher characteristics, and family involvement. This chapter will then explore educational implications, address limitations within the study, and provide recommendations for future research.

Significant Findings

The significant findings of the study have been categorized into four themes: the relevance of identity, culturally based curriculum, teacher characteristics, and family involvement. “The relevance of identity” refers to the importance of self-development and identity in relationship to education. “Culturally based curriculum” includes a

summary of the results that suggest the most efficient methods for culturally based curriculum. “Teacher characteristics” utilize the principles of “The great law” in order to develop positive relationships between student and teacher. “Family involvement” revisits the original roles and responsibility’s of the Haudenosaunee, to remind the people of the importance of providing for and nurturing the children. The underlying message recognized within the significant findings suggests the need for empowerment in the reclamation of the Haudenosaunee perspective on education.

The relevance of identity is undeniable. The results of this study strongly supports the literature review in addressing the importance of nurturing one’s sense of identity by providing children with a strong foundation of their inherited language and culture. Having a foundation that creates understanding and honors one’s sense of self, supports one to learn more efficiently throughout their life. (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972)

Curriculum for an Haudenosaunee language and cultural based education should honor the traditional educational practices of the Haudenosaunee. The results suggest that western pedagogy be avoided in language and cultural based educational efforts. From a Haudenosaunee perspective, it appears that language and culture based educational pedagogy should be taught through action, within a natural environment, that follows the yearly ceremonial cycle. Students should be immersed in both the language and culture of the Haudenosaunee entirely since the foundation of Haudenosaunee pedagogy is centered in the natural universal cycle, therefore requiring constant action based education.

Reclamation through a language and cultural based education is something that can be done with little financial support. The participants within the study have suggested that financial support from outside sources can often times be limiting and regressive for education. Kaliwakélu suggests that creating a commune where people come together as a learning community would increase the likelihood of success. According to Kaliwakélu creating a commune is achievable even when there are limited speakers and limited funding.

Kaliwakélu shared his experience in the founding of Tsiniyukwalihot[^], a language and cultural based place of learning (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2012). Kaliwakélu expressed the difficult task of deciding when funding is beneficial toward the overall goal. Kaliwakélu faced the difficult decision in accepting funding which would require Tsiniyukwalihot[^] to follow the Ontario Standards of Education, he stated: “We’re far beyond Ontario standards, we would have to spend another 40 years of decolonization after meeting their standards” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

When it comes to the Indigenous educational practices, the data suggests that the damage from financial funding from systems that regulate standards far out weight the benefits. Kaliwakélu goes on to share, “It’s a struggle of what we went through, but you have to stick to what our belief system is. Our culture is not for sale, it never will be” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). Recognizing utilizing Haudenosaunee pedagogy is important to the success of language and culture initiatives.

Principles of the: *The Great Law* and *The Good Message* are ethical principles, which have been long established by the Haudenosaunee. Peace, Power (personal

strength), and a Good Mind are the three main ethical principles. (House, 2010)

Principles of *The Great Law* need not be taught in a curricula format, rather, ethics should be taught through ethical practice. These practices are embedded in our language and cultural protocol's, stories, governance, and ceremonies. Learners and mentors alike should be both willing and devoted to language and cultural based education continually throughout their lives. It is a mutual commitment for learning. The ancient ethic principles of *The Great Law* contribute to the longevity of the Haudenosaunee confederacy.

The results gathered from participants about the nature of their mentors suggested that mentors were strict and adamant, which participants perceived as “caring” qualities. Participants had an understanding of the need for education as a means for survival. Traditionally student/teacher relationships were respected as equals. Traditional perspectives on learning commonly understood that learning was continuous throughout life. As a result, participants reported that mentors were very approachable. The foundation, for which the Haudenosaunee confederacy is built on, is the appreciation of all of creation, and showing respect, gratitude, and equality to all living things (Walker 2004). Both learners and instructors should understand these attributes. The study demonstrates mentors were respected by their students based on how mentors were able to show empathy towards their students by being patient and allowing them to learn at their own pace.

Second language learners of this study contributed their language and cultural growth, and success to the principles of Peace, Power, and Good Mind. Participants demonstrated that those who understand their purpose, their identity, and their heritage,

view the world from a unique perspective. After conducting this study it seems as though the unique perspective of the Haudenosaunee is developed in being dully nurtured in both language and cultural practices. Participant Hoyá'danā:gwa't stated that in order to begin the journey towards reclamation, "one must first decide that is what they really want to do, and when you do, you have to really push yourself to do it" (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

There are various ways that mentors have been able to provide their students with an environment that allows them to achieve an independent sense of motivation.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't described how his mentor exposed him to a lot of practical experiences. His mentor always provided the proper support and encouragement when exposing him to situations outside of his comfort zone. He described how critical the pressure was for him to learn because he was put into situations that relied on his performance. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't personal communication, March 3, 2015). Hoyá'danā:gwa't defined being "forced" as a learning experience, yet he described his mentor as caring, encouraging, informative and supportive in assuring the success of these tasks.

Hoyá'danā:gwa't elaborated,

For example we didn't have a speaker on the territory so my grandmother had asked me to do a funeral. I had said no because I didn't know how, and I didn't think I had enough skills to do it. She then sat me down and gave me a lecture about how it is important to learn because some day she's not gonna be there so it's better to learn now while she's here and while she's strong than try to do it when there's no one available. So with lots of reluctance I agreed. (personal communication, March 3, 2015)

Hoyá'danā:gwa't has since been conducting funerals, and is continually building upon his existing speech, improving his pronunciation, and understanding to a greater extent. Hoyá'danā:gwa't concluded by expressing the value of mentor using their influence to provide opportunities for their students to find motivation through challenging situations. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

The three ancient principles of “The Great Law” are equally as important for second language learners as is for first language speakers. Language and culture maintenance is equally challenging for first language speakers of an Indigenous language within mainstream society. YakohsΛniyósta shared the struggles that she faced in the education system, where she was forced to stand and write 100 lines of “I must not talk Oneida... I must not talk Oneida” after getting caught teasing and joking with other Oneida speaking children. (YakohsΛniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015). YakohsΛniyósta demonstrated the importance of possessing the three principles as she states “I knew it wouldn't control me. It would not keep me from speaking my language. It was just an assignment. That was the only time I'd get in trouble really...” (YakohsΛniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015). YakohsΛniyósta did well in school despite her language use. In those times language use was viewed negatively in the education system. Having had the resilience, strength, and courage has to this day greatly contributed to the Oneida people as YakohsΛniyósta is still speaking and teaching the language across various Oneida territories.

The strength that Indigenous elders possessed in order to overcome situations that could have destroyed not only language and culture, but the people, needs to be recognized and honored. Those who seek to reclaim their identity need to recognize that

they need to possess these same strengths. These three ancient principles of the Indigenous people of the Haudenosaunee can potentially provide students with a strong sense of purpose. Furthermore they can also be used as core competencies in many other areas of their lives. The ethical teachings are not only principles, but also tools for achieving a positive state of mind, practicing interpersonal relationships, and strong community building. Imagine the potential that a nation, community, school, organization, or family would have if it consisted of membership who practiced the teachings of the Great Law. The ethics and principles of the Great Law would really benefit an education system, not only would it help to create a positive learning environment but it would also help to create a healthy teaching environment. Haudenosaunee concepts and practices, such as, the Great Law of Peace have been critical components to the longevity of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Each participant in this study credited their success to their mentors, and their ability to positively address errors and mistakes. Often times oral traditional story telling was the best way to address errors and mistakes. Participants reported that errors and mistakes made for the best learning opportunities, which supported Dulay & Burt (1974) stating that mistakes were a natural part of the learning process.

Gahegaga suggests that developing listening skills is unavoidable when learning a language, she reports “ we are at a time where so many of our speakers are gone, but how you get good at your language is by hearing it, listening is equally as important as speaking.” (Gahegaga, personal communication, March 28, 2015). She suggests the use of audio recordings of our elders. Unedited audio of fluent speakers is almost always nearly perfect, because even though there are mistakes you can learn something about the

language and more importantly about the universal perspective and culture of the people. Gahegake elaborates by giving an instance where in some cases second language learners may misinterpret the speaker. One common misinterpretation is, trying to correct a first language speakers use of pronominal pronouns, without realizing something as simple as the use of pronominal pronouns describes the culture of the people. “Speakers make mistakes but I find a lot of those things are like when their talking about a whole group of people they just talk the whole group of she, like in our language but idk if it’s like that in every language but in Cayuga it’s like that I don’t think it’s a mistake how they talk it I think it is because they thought about everyone collectively like the feminine was very strong like in those days and uh the guys they really respected the woman” (Gahegake, personal communication, March 28, 2015). This example answers the research question, “*Is language learned more efficiently if it is taught within its own cultural framework?*” It is clear that Haudenosaunee language demonstrates information on the universal perspective of the Haudenosaunee culture. When learning the language and culture of the Haudenosaunee it is important to be mindful for what appears to be errors in language documentation, because they tell a story about the people.

Important also to the culture of Haudenosaunee learning is humor. Laughter was one of the most important learning tools. Humor was a way to learn even the most difficult of topics.

Family involvement

Immersion is not a one-size-fits all method. The term “immersion” needs to be redefined for all Indigenous language and cultures. In order to bridge the gap between language immersion programs in the home is to incorporate family involvement.

The data from the study report that language is learned most efficiently in a natural environment. Learners should be fully immersed in the language and culture entirely. Language and culture is something that can be learned, taught, and practiced within all environments. It is not limited to a certain space or time.

According to Kaliwakélu, recruitment for Indigenous language and cultural educational programs need to be informative and non-threatening. The change that is needed comes as Indigenous people become parents. By informing parents, curiosity will inspire families to join efforts to reclaim language and cultural education practices. (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). As new parents become inspired through curiosity to fulfill their role to their children it is important to educate parents on the traditional Haudenosaunee roles and responsibilities of the family.

As an adult it is difficult to be patient with children, because there is so much “important” things going on in the adult life. Stop and think about what’s really important... it’s the needs of the children. Families must work together to nurture the children, each and every second, of each and every day. We bring children into this world so that they can be apart of our lives. We bring children into this world so that they can be apart of this world. We must be there to nurture them; we must be there to assist them in their development; we must be there to meet their needs. (Anahalihs, personal communication, March 11, 2015).

Due to heavy colonization, it may seem as though Indigenous people have lost the appreciation for their own Indigenous language and cultural educational practices. The restoration of appreciation for Indigenous educational practices will resurface as the Indigenous population become exposed to their traditional knowledge.

One thing to consider when educating young children is that they haven't been exposed to the past. They do not carry the same hardships that their ancestors had endured. Hoyá'danā:gwa't expresses that it is through the children language and culture will flourish. With each generation we are offered a fresh start. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015). When working in language and culture initiatives we must remember the strength in educating our children, provide them with a positive perspective about their identity. Be mindful of how we conduct the ways of the people, for there are always children who are watching. Through the children is how to strengthen the people, create an environment that allows for the children to decolonize the confederacy.

Educational Implications

A critical educational implication needed to develop a Haudenosaunee education system grounded in Haudenosaunee language and culture based would be to reclaim the traditional structure of the Haudenosaunee. By reclaiming the traditional structure the roles and responsibilities of family and relationship become priority because it recognizes the relationship to the overall system that we live in. We are all related, which includes all of creation. In conclusion, by educating with a traditional structure it creates a whole system paradigm that looks at all of creation as a family. Educational best practices have been long been established by the Haudenosaunee.

One of the most talked about methods that were discussed by participants in the study was how prevalent reading and writing has become a part of the language and cultural learning environment. All participants deliberated on the pros and con's of utilizing reading and writing as a tool for learning. Hoyá'danā:gwa't's second language

learning experience included very little writing for two reasons. The first he states “I remember my grandma also saying that a lot of words were untranslatable because they do not describe an action. They describe an emotion, so I think that is why she was so against writing stuff down. A lot of stuff could not be translated, at least not with her English abilities anyway.” (Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

The second reason his discouraged him from writing was because she felt as though it would cause him to become dependent on it. Hoyá’danā:gwa’t shares how his mentor discouraged the memorization of speeches word-for-word. Memorization was believed to disable learners. Memorization does not allow learners to fully understand, revisit, recreate, and expand on information. What Hoyá’danā:gwa’t’s mentor would do was explain the word enough to help Hoyá’danā:gwa’t create an image in his head. Hoyá’danā:gwa’t explains how this learning strategy was very productive for him when learning to preach Kaliwiyo (The good message). He really challenged himself to memorize a picture of each topic and then from there he would describe what he was seeing in the image. Today he is one of few who are able to recite Kaliwiyo. (Hoyá’danā:gwa’t, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Gahegage recalls her mentors views as being quite similar. She shared memories of her mentor “That is not good, because if you write stuff down that helps you. Your mind is going to get lazy. Your mind will get lazy then your not going to know what to do on your own, but it’s up to you...” Gahegage went on to add that her mentor was never strictly against writing, however she was clear that it was not a healthy method for learning. (Gahegage, personal communication, March 28, 2015).

Data collected from Kaliwakélu describes the unique setting and culture within the home he was raised. Kaliwakélu recalls how musical instruments (aside from a traditional drum), and books were prohibited inside the home. Kaliwakélu was required to complete his studies outside in the woodshed where there was a designated area for books. Reasoning was taught within the home through discourse spoken in their traditional language. Kaliwakélu states “Everything was spoken in the language, because he said “people write books and people who read books never get a chance to express themselves” and he said “reading will take their mind away to do their own reasoning and their choices in their life.” So that’s what they used to do” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

In certain situations it seems as though written literature has benefited learners. Yakohsaniyósta did not know how to read or write the language until later in life. For her reading and writing was not necessary because there were so many fluent speakers at that time. Today she reads to one of her students and he translates what he understands, Yakohsaniyósta shares that this has greatly improved his understandability. (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015).

The data suggest that the traditional Haudenosaunee oral tradition make for best practice of language and cultural learning. However, participants of this study express the emerging relevance of writing. Kaliwakélu describes the Haudenosaunee languages as being very complex, conversation requires the use of extensive pronominal and transitive prefixes, which speakers will master when given the opportunity to converse. The limitation according to Kaliwakélu is that the writing system does not allow for such extensive derivational practice. According to Kaliwakélu “We are not a people that

write, you have to remember that. Now we do have to write, back then it wasn't so. Today is a different era in time which requires different learning" (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). Gahegage believes that utilizing written literature is something that is necessary in today's society. She believes that utilizing written literature will not take away from the culture of the people, rather it could benefit them. Gahegage describes how important the documentation was left by various elders and that these things should be utilized as a tool to regain the understanding of the Haudenosaunee. "I don't see it as being bad, as long as we keep control of it. Certain teachings don't go into the broader society it just stays in the Haudenosaunee environment" (Gahegage, personal communication, March 28, 2015). Yakohsaniyósta did not know how to read or write the language until later in life. For her reading and writing was not necessary because there were so many fluent speakers at that time. Today she reads to one of her students and he translates what he understands, Yakohsaniyósta shares that this has greatly improved his understandability. (Yakohsaniyósta, personal communication, March 27, 2015). In certain situations it seems as though written literature has benefited learners.

The data found all participants of the study suggest practical experience is the foundation of a Haudenosaunee language and culture based education system. According to Kaliwakélu education is achieved simply by doing no matter what the task. The key is in making sure that it's being done using the target language, and in correlation with the culture of the people. Kaliwakélu looks at his foundation for learning and realizes that his education came from practical experiences. He states "that's the beauty of the whole thing, little did I know that's how you learn" (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). The participants of this study explained how explanation was a key

component in learning from experience. Deliberation between mentors and learners was the way that the Haudenosaunee reinforced learning. This was the most effective way to ensure that students gained a greater understandability of various topics. As important as it is for mentor's to explain, it is equally as important for them to listen. Kaliwakélu describes how discussion was encouraged between him and his mentors, discussing various topics allows for learners to develop their own thoughts and reason on various topics with an ability to build on them (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015). A holistic approach to teaching is critical to the growth of an individual. One-on-one time with your mentor(s) is highly recommended by Hoyá'danā:gwa't this is something that should be reinforced every hour of every day of our young peoples lives. (Hoyá'danā:gwa't, personal communication, March 6, 2015).

Anahalis explains just how critical it is to focus our attention on speaking to our children.

As our children are born they have a right that their family and their people to be there to instruct them, to give them the language, and to provide the foundation for learning, through their own language, and as they grow it is their right to be guided in a way that allows them to build upon that foundation. Simply growing their own foods, preparing their own meals, all of these simple everyday things are components that contribute to their overall understanding. (Anahalihs, personal communication, March 11, 2015)

Anahalis emphasizes how critical it is to begin to focus much more on our children, giving them a strong foundation based on their inherited language and culture.

In providing our children with this educational foundation is how the language and culture will be restored. (Anahalihs, personal communication, March 11, 2015)

Recognizing the strengths of both Haudenosaunee and Western Educational systems, participants of this study support that Haudenosaunee students benefit holistically when they are able to identify by learning western pedagogy through the language and culture of their own ancestry. This research suggests that the broader field of education could benefit from the teaching methods traditionally practiced by the Haudenosaunee confederacy. Haudenosaunee principles can be practiced in any place where learning is happening.

Recommendations for Future Research

As the research project progressed there were only more questions to be answered. In the beginning stages of the research, as the PI, I set out in search of research which supported the implementation of more Iroquoian language and culture immersion schools, it became apparent that in order for language and culture to flourish, Haudenosaunee need to regain respect for the existing knowledge within the structure of the confederacy.

If given the opportunity to change anything in this study it would have been only to expand upon it to include participants from each territory across the Haudenosaunee confederacy. Language and cultural based education programs would surely benefit from the gathering of various methods, perspectives, and techniques. However, due to the short duration of the study traveling to each territory was not feasible.

In addition, four other recommendations for research emerged throughout the research project. The first recommendation for research is to identify the relationship between Haudenosaunee scholars and traditional practice. The second recommendation is to identify how the idea of “immersion” limits language and culture education initiatives. The third recommendation for research would be to take a closer look at the educational success and increase in wellness for language and cultural students, with the research question “Does learning happen more efficiently when taught within an inherited language and cultural framework?” Finally, the last research recommendation would be to research different routes to reverse modern thinking that supports a lack of parental involvement.

Limitations

As anticipated the biggest limitation of the study was that each nation and territory of the Haudenosaunee was not individually represented within this study.

Summary

Language and cultural restoration can only be achieved as Indigenous people become empowered by the educational structures of their people and culture itself. Indigenous languages are restored when the universe is recognized through it. Indigenous culture is restored when the intentions of our ancestors are reflected through a positive relationship between the people and the universe. This understanding of the relationship between the self and the universe; past, present, and future is paramount to the restoration of Indigenous language and culture.

Without practicing ceremonial components of culture, the language cannot be understood to its full potential. Similarly the culture cannot be understood without

understanding the language that has developed with it. The data that emerged throughout the study suggests that language and culture is not something that can be read about in a book, stored away in a museum, and definitely cannot be learned or understood through a western institutionalized setting because of the different value systems or paradigms.

The language and culture of a people is something that is alive, something that is nurtured and maintained. Taking systems apart to study is not consistent with Indigenous education. In fact quite the contrary. Indigenous education is about respecting our relationship with the universe and belief that we are all one. For this reason it appears that the Western educational paradigm of taking things apart to assess and measure cannot be applied to Indigenous education. This view was supported with the following, “I always tell my people, my culture is not under glass. You don’t have to go to a museum to find out who we are. We are living it. Its a lifetime of experience, a lifetime!” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015)

According to the data found in this study learning begins from the time a spirit is sent to the womb of the mother, it is continuous throughout sleep and is the responsibility of the family and the community to ensure that each spirit is nurtured on a daily bases. It is a right for every individual spirit to know the teachings which have been inherited to them. It goes beyond institution walls, cannot be interpreted through literature or arranged into set levels of learning. You have to want it. It’s not something that you have to go to school for so many years or get a degree,” (Kaliwakélu, personal communication, March 27, 2015)

It appears that Indigenous, and more specifically Haudenosaunee language and cultural learning does not apply to the western framework for education. Haudenosaunee

language and cultural based education efforts need to acknowledge the unique educational practices of the confederacy. Due to the current condition of Haudenosaunee languages and culture, the data recommend that being open to various learning methods be used to meet the learning needs of all individuals is critical.

It is my hope that conducting this study has encouraged the Haudenosaunee to be empowered by the strength and knowledge of their ancestors. Be empowered to take ownership over the roles and responsibilities laid out by the original instructions for the people. Gahegaga stated, “the young people are doing a good job trying but at the same time we have to step it up.” (Gahegaga, personal communication, March 28, 2015). I would agree and challenge readers to think beyond western pedagogy. Think outside the walls of an institution, and look inside of one’s self.

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